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VBH BOT FYI Planning

1 message

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Algonquin bypass work to begin this summer, if capital bill sticks

By Elena Ferrarin NW Herald

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Excavation work for the long-awaited downtown bypass of Route 31 in Algonquin might begin this summer, but construction won't begin until at least the spring of 2012.

In April, the Illinois Department of Transportation will seek bids for the grading of the so-called Western Bypass at Algonquin Road, department spokesman Guy Tridgell said. It's a project geared to relieve congestion near the intersection of routes 31 and 62 that's been awaiting funding since it was designed in 1998.

The current timeline for construction of the Western Bypass of Route 31 in Algonquin is as follows:

- Demolition of buildings along Algonquin Road, between Route 31 and Meyer Drive, takes place in the next few months.
- IDOT seeks bids for grading work in April.
- Grading and excavation work begins this summer.
- Final design plans ready later this year.
- Construction begins in spring 2012.
- Project finished by fall 2013.

Depending on whether the Illinois Supreme Court upholds a lower court's ruling to throw out the state's \$31 billion capital construction program, construction will last through the fall of 2013. But no detailed timeline or plan is available yet, Tridgell said.

Algonquin Public Works Director Robert Mitchard said the project is expected to alleviate traffic congestion, especially when commuters travel south on Route 31 and east on Algonquin Road in the morning, and in the opposite direction in the evening.

Before excavation begins, seven buildings now owned by IDOT on Algonquin Road between Meyer Drive and Route 31 are slated for demolition.

Among them are the Burnex Corp., Parkside Auto Center and the Algonquin Roadhouse, Mitchard said. In addition, IDOT has already started to remove the foundation of the abandoned Toastmaster

building, which burned down in October.

Wally Dittrich, design manager for the McHenry County Division of Transportation, said that IDOT recently opened bidding for demolition of the Roadhouse and Parkside Auto Center. He added that the excavation project will amount to moving 600,000 cubic yards of earth.

Although the blueprint for the project is complete, final designs will be finished later this year, said Gary Blazek, design project manager for Itasca-based Civiltech Engineering. A team of eight to 12 people is working on "several hundred" pages of plans, he said.

Preliminary designs for the 70-million project started in 1998. The bypass will veer off westward from the current Route 31 at Elmwood Court, rejoining Route 31 at Huntington Drive, well north of downtown. Altogether, the project spans Route 31 from Rakow Road to Edgewood Drive. Portions of Route 31, Huntington Drive and Algonquin Road will be widened and resurfaced.

Once the project is completed, IDOT expects jurisdiction of the old, bypassed portion of Route 31 to be transferred to the village, Tridgell said.

The \$70 million project is funded by Illinois Jobs Now!, a six-year, \$31 billion state capital construction plan signed into law by Gov. Pat Quinn in 2009.

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